



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

December 3, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: Jim Hynes, Assistant to the City Manager

Subject: Berkeley Animal Shelter Lost Pet Photographs

INTRODUCTION

This report is in response to a referral to the City Manager from Councilmember Kriss Worthington requesting that lost pets brought to Berkeley Animal Shelter have their photos taken as soon as possible so that they can be displayed online for the public to see.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Animal Shelter provides a wide array of services. Photographs of lost animals are taken as quickly as possible after the animal arrives. Animal Services relies on volunteers to carry out this important function as staff capacity is insufficient to allocate two employees at intake: one to handle each animal and another to photograph the animal and then post those photos on websites. In determining the appropriate time to photograph an animal, several factors must be considered including: the number of volunteers available to photograph and handle the animal; the temperament of the animal; whether the animal is traumatized at the time of intake. Currently, volunteers take photos of lost animals and post them twice weekly on [www.Petharbor.com](http://www.Petharbor.com) as well as other lost and found Pet web sites.

BACKGROUND

When an animal is lost, shelter staff advises the public to come to the shelter and look for their animal in person. Once the owner arrives, he/she is asked to do three things: 1) fill out a Lost Animal Report, 2) check the Found Animal Report and 3) check the Log of dead animals that have been picked up in the field. These reports are kept at the front counter. Owners of lost animals are also given an extensive list of suggestions for finding their lost pet which can also be found on the animal services web page.

If a pet owner is unable to come to the shelter, a staff member will take the information over the phone, check the Shelter inventory to see if there is a possible match and when possible will request that the owner email a photograph of the missing pet. However, the owner is still advised to come and check the shelter in person or to send someone who would recognize the animal. In addition, [www.petharbor.com](http://www.petharbor.com), which is

updated twice a day, includes detailed descriptions of all found animals regardless of whether there is a photo.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Animal Services is in contact with the IT Department to find out if there is a simple and affordable way in which volunteers and/or staff (operational capacity and temperament of the animal permitting) can photograph and upload pictures of animals immediately upon intake.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Costs are currently unknown and will be determined in consultation with IT.

CONTACT PERSON

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